

"Corrected" Meeting Minutes

CUMBERLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

FEBRUARY 22, 2007

MINUTES

The regular meeting of the Cumberland School Committee held on Thursday, February 22, 2007 at the Cumberland Administrative Office/Cafetorium, 2602 Mendon Road, was called to order at 7:31 PM, by Chairman Frederic C. Crowley, with the following present:

Frederic C. Crowley, Chairman, Robert Thibodeau, Vice Chair, Karen MacBeth, Clerk, Lisa Beaulieu, W. David Wagner, Earl T. Wood

Also Present: Donna A. Morelle, Ed.D., Superintendent; Susan C. Carney, Ph.D, Assistant Superintendent; Joseph A. Rotella, Esq., Director of Administration

Absent: Donald J. Costa

I. Pledge of Allegiance - The Pledge of Allegiance was led by committee members.

II. Approval of Agenda - On a motion by Mr. Thibodeau, and a second by Mr. Wood, it was VOTED 6-0 TO APPROVE the agenda.

III. Chairperson's Report - The Chair noted Mr. Costa was away on business. He asked anyone interested in speaking under Comments from the Public to keep to the five minute limit. Mr. Crowley reported receiving a letter from Pamela Shalvois on freshmen sports and a letter from Mr. Wood's daughter, Erin, on the construction at the High School.

IV. Comments from the Public

A. Public Comments - None.

B. Student Government Report - The Superintendent noted the Student Safety Workshop will be reported out under New Business.

V. Reports of Standing Committees

A. Finance Committee

1. Payment of Invoices - On a motion by Mr. Thibodeau and a second by Ms. MacBeth, it was VOTED 6-0 TO APPROVE payment of invoices in the amount of \$1,364,762.00.

2. Expenditure Report - Mr. Prignano reported a revised copy of the report has been filed. He met with the town Finance Director. Only \$63,000 had been budgeted for the purchase of a truck so the amount was corrected to \$67,000. He reported transportation was overspent by \$92,000.

3. Payroll Upgrade - Mr. Prignano reported the payroll reporting system was owned by a consultant hired to bring the system in and there is no maintenance contract on the system.

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This is preventing him from running the school department's own calculations for personnel, taxes. The cost of the upgrade would be \$16,000 which would allow maintenance help and would meet the state's requirement for a new ledger system that the old system can't provide. The Business Manager noted the new Technology Director is familiar with Crystal Reporting. On a motion by Mr. Thibodeau, and a second by Ms. MacBeth, it was VOTED 6-0 TO APPROVE the payroll upgrade contract.

4. Non-Public School Texts - Mr. Wagner reported the school department is required to purchase these texts. On a motion by Mr. Thibodeau, and a second by Ms. MacBeth, it was VOTED 6-0 TO APPROVE the payment.

Mr. Wood requested receiving a copy of the register prior to the meeting and Mr. Prignano explained some invoices needed to be paid after the agenda was done to avoid interest. He noted most are repetitive bills. The Superintendent noted the packets are sent out the Friday before a meeting, but another delivery could be made.

VI. Consent Agenda

A. Personnel Recommendations - The Superintendent presented the following recommendations:

1. On a motion by Mr. Wood, and a second by Mr. Wagner, it was VOTED 6-0 TO APPROVE the resignation of Kristen Polseno, English Teacher, at Cumberland High School, effective 6/30/2007.

2. On a motion by Mr. Wagner, and a second by Mr. Thibodeau, it was VOTED 6-0 TO APPROVE the retirement of the following individuals at the end of the 2006-2007 school year:

**Karen Brousseau Enrichment Coordinator Ashton School
Gail Frappier English Teacher Cumberland High School
Mary Ann Garlock Grade 4 Teacher Community School
Kathleen Hart Special Educator-Resource Cumberland High School
Wendy Hickey Speech/Language Educator B.F. Norton School
Ann Iannotti Guidance Counselor North Cumberland MS
Francis Jones English Teacher North Cumberland MS
Marlene Wilk Grade 5 Teacher Community School
Daniel Zabinski Elementary Music Teacher System-wide - Ashton**

The Superintendent suggested inviting all retirees to a future meeting to be recognized.

VII. Old Business

A. Building Committee Update - Mr. Wood Reported the bids went out for the CHS2010 Phase 3 construction. On the 5th there will be an informational meeting and on the 12th the committee will be meeting with representatives from Edvance.

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On the 19th there will be a regular meeting and bids will be reviewed. Mr. Wood noted all meetings are open to the public. He also reported the 3.5 Building Committee will meet on the 28th and will discuss going out to bid for the elementary schools. The Town Council will see what can be funded. Mr. Hilton is going through the punch list for windows and doors with the architect.

VIII. New Business

A. Report from Student Safety Workshop - Mr. Wood reported meeting with students, teachers and the police to discuss many topics, including smoking, security, ID's, traffic, the Wellness Center. The Superintendent noted the importance of what works at the High School for safety. Mr. Thibodeau suggested flame detectors be used in the lavs to curtail smoking.

B. 2007-2008 School Calendar - The Superintendent reported the calendar the committee received is just a draft. She noted the new requirement that seniors complete 180 days of instruction and they will no longer be allowed early release. She also stated Cumberland usually starts school before Labor Day but may want to start after Labor Day due to construction. Woonsocket has approved their calendar and they are starting after Labor Day. Ms. MacBeth suggested looking at the December and January break and come back later to conserve heat. The Superintendent noted they would then be looking at the final date of June 25th without any snow days.

The committee will review the schedule.

C. Vote to Approve 2007-2008 School Budget - The Superintendent thanked the leadership team. She noted there were two public workshops and they needed to approve the final budget and send it to the Mayor and Town Council by March 1st. Dr. Morelle commented that the budget supported the next steps in meeting the needs of 100% of the students 100% of the time and that the budget is within the requirements of the 3050 legislation. She noted they need to acquire the whole 3% state aid and will seek the maximum funding under the law for an operating budget.

The Chair allowed comments from the public. Mr. Madden commented on the importance of athletics and extra curricular activities. Mr. McLaughlin gave his home number of 333-4946 for people to call him to get a message to legislators. He expressed concern for cutting custodians and buses. Mr. Tonello asked the committee not to cut sports. The Superintendent explained the vulnerability of freshman sports and that she has discussed this with Mr. Geiselman. She noted Cumberland is one of only a few towns that fund freshman sports. She cited an example of the Purell dispensers and there is no budget for the mandated refills. Mr. Thurston disseminated a chart of per pupil spending in the state and asked for more money. The Superintendent responded the town can only appropriate a 5.25% increase. Mr. Rotella explained the general assembly law that was passed binds the school committee and the town can't increase by law.

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He stated the 3050 legislation is now the law and the Carullo Act is null and void. Ms. Lazarus commented on freshman athletics. The Superintendent explained that isn't the only vulnerable area; they may have to move the pre-school to another school.

She stated they will have other forums for the community to become involved. Ms. Lazarus stated she would like a place for students to work on solutions. Mr. Crawley commented athletics is underfunded and if there is a \$9,000 shortfall something will have to be cut. The Superintendent stated the next hurdle is to find the appropriation from the town and that will give them a time line and figure and they can go back to recreate the process. Mr. Lussier commented on the importance of sports and suggested it was time to consider a fee. The Superintendent explained that is illegal in RI. Ms. Chammat commented the Strategic Plan gave her a sense of pride, noting its rigor of specificity. Mr. Roy stated his son heard AP classes are being cut and has now learned that isn't true. He expressed concern for the cleaning of the schools with one less custodian. The Superintendent stated she trusted the recommendation of the facilities director and she would never compromise health and safety of students or employees in the district. Ms. McCann asked about the cuts in transportation and walking distances. The Superintendent explained they are doing an analysis of students and the policy

hadn't been reviewed since 1987. She noted there is no recommendation at this time. Trevor Vasey spoke about his positive experience as an 8th grade basketball player and suggested fund raisers.

The Chair called a recess at 9:35 p.m. Open Session resumed at 9:45 p.m.

Mr. Thibodeau made a motion to approve the Superintendent's Budget of \$52,122,107. Ms. Beaulieu provided a second. Mr. Wood stated if the budgeted isn't funded they will have to cut it again. He would like to see administration come back with an agenda if the Town Council doesn't fund it. Ms. Beaulieu expressed concern for the negative effect this will have on learning and people should be aware of consequences if the Town Council doesn't fund it. Mr. Wagner commented this is an easy year and he doesn't think the state will repeal the legislation. We need to stop thinking about ourselves and start thinking about the students. Mr. Thibodeau stated they probably won't get the full increase, noting they need to do something about providing funding for nurses, textbooks and transportation for private schools. Ms. MacBeth expressed concern for sports and doesn't want to loose those coaches. She also commented on tracking at the middle and high schools. She stated out of district tuitions, career and tech prep areas need to be looked at in the budget. Mr. Crowley echoed the sentiments of all the committee members, especially Ms. MacBeth. He thank everyone for

their work on the budget. On a roll call vote, it was VOTED 6-0 TO APPROVE the motion.

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D. Non-renewals - The Superintendent reported state law required non-renewals be notified by March first. She noted she has met with Mr. McGarry and all individuals have been notified in writing by certified mail and she has met with many in person. Mr. Wood made a motion to approve the Superintendent's recommendations for non-renewals per attached. Mr. Thibodeau provided a second. On a roll call vote, it was VOTED 6-0 TO APPROVE the motion.

IX. Superintendent's Report - The Superintendent thanked the committee for their vote on the budget. She pointed out the receipt of an invitation of committee members to the annual dinner meeting of the Northern RI Collaborative on March 29th. She noted the data warehouse release on March 27th. She stated she would meet with the Chair to write the cover letter to the town on the budget.

X. Comments from the Public - None.

XI. School Committee Comments (School Liaison Reports) - Mr. Wood

reported March 1st is Reading Across America day. Upcoming events at Cumberland Hill are Monster Trucks and a Sweetheart Dance. He noted the budget is a proposal. The Chair noted he had received correspondence from Mrs. Gibney inviting the committee to visit the Pre-School. He commented he and the Superintendent had worked long hours on the budget and her response to him was perfect and his vote and support was a demonstration of his confidence in the Superintendent. Ms. MacBeth commented that she hoped if the proposed tuition increase was not a success they could go back so the rate is comparable to other schools in town.

XII. Vote to go into Executive Session for Discussion and/or Action Items Referred to in GLRI 42-46-5

A. Personnel Matters - Exception (1)

1. CTA/ICSE

B. Negotiations/Litigation - Exception (2)

1. CTA/ICSE

2. Central Administrators' Contracts

3. Non-Contractual Salaries

4. Potential Litigation

Mr. Wood made a motion to adjourn to Executive Session. Ms. Beaulieu provided a second. On a roll call vote, the motion FAILED 3-3, with the following voting AYE: Mr. Wood, Mr. Wagner, Ms. Beaulieu; NAY: Mr. Thibodeau, Ms. MacBeth, Mr. Crowley.

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XIII. Adjournment - On a motion by Mr. Wagner, and a second by Ms. MacBeth, it was VOTED 6-0 TO APPROVE adjourning Open Session at 10:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Shirley Harris

Recording Secretary

Approved by the School Committee March 8, 2007